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ABSTRACT

Now that women have been admitted to the higher echelons of management, they can begin to work together to remove those barriers which still affect their full participation in administration. Strategies for overcoming these barriers must focus on the lack of opportunity as well as on the establishment of programs specifically designed to place women into positions of leadership. The most comprehensive strategy for correcting the underrepresentation of women in educational administration is the implementation of Executive Order 11246 which requires affirmative action plans. Institutions must also organize strategies related to staff training, employment procedures, and recruitment to make it possible for women to develop to their fullest potentials and to make use of such potential in solving social problems. Individuals and organizations can develop strategies such as networking, retraining, peer-support groups, and mentor relationships. (Author)

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SURVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS

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SURVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS

The number of women in the American work force has burgeoned in the past twenty years, from 36.8% in 1950 to 43% today. This growth has triggered a spate of new problems which cry out for creative and sometimes wholly untested solutions.

Work toward acheivement of those solutions has moved forward simultaneously on many fronts. For example, recent legislation has generated awareness and concern among employers for the special problems experienced by women who work. Affirmative action plans have provided strategies appropriate to the industry, agency or educational institutions for which they were designed. Some women's groups, drawing upon broad, shared experience, have established centers concerned with the design of remedies; others have worked with legislators to change oppressive laws governing equal pay, credit, admissions and advancement, overtime and evening hours. Laws which in the past have limited women's opportunities have given way to laws which protect them — with the result that many women are experiencing a drastically improved quality of life.

At the same time, consulting firms have sprung up from Augusta to Aberdeen, eager to provide expert assistance to women as they struggle with the personal challenges of setting realistic career goals on one hand, and to management faced with assessing the skills of potential candidates for advancement into managerial roles, on the other hand.

The literature suggest that women are underrepresented in decision-making positions and that this underrepresentation is due both to the ideas which women have about themselves and to those which society has imposed upon those who do hiring.

Strategies likely to be useful to individual women seeking advancement — as well as those which may be helpful to representatives of the organizations they seek to advance in — will be discussed here. All of these strategies have in common, however, the promise for developing the potential of every worker so that society may benefit fully from the special talents of each.

Charlene T. Dale[1] (1973) suggests that one way women may gain a sense of perspective on their own lives and a fuller awareness of the feminine role in our society is to read the literature which is emerging from the women's movement. Dale also urges individual women searching for new awarenesses to participate in women's groups, particularly those which study the education of women.

While acknowledging that some women are reluctant to share some of their more infuriating experiences related to sex bias and discrimination, Dale points to the ways in which women may gain strength from such discussion. She contends that the realization by individual women that they are not alone in their frustration is a vital first awareness, adding that women with more sophisticated grasps of the problem may make valuable contributions to the progress of other women who are facing the same problems for the first time. According to Dale, the end result of open discussion in support groups is a strengthened sense of self-worth on the part of both those who give and those who receive.

Judith Long Laws[2] (1975) addresses the special concerns of women who find themselves hired as "tokens" due to the timetables of an affirmative action plan. For these women, Laws calls the availability of a female peer group in which to work out the meanings of their experience essential. Law adds that

these "tokens" are sometimes perceived by co-workers as being of little value since they are products of an affirmative action plan. D. Rosenberg[3] (1977) insists that female tokens should demonstrate competency early and often, and should seek a high level of visibility. Since titles are ascribed to these positions with little power, it is essential that the women who hold them find a way to gain control over all the decisions related to the production for which they are accountable. Rosenberg suggests that it may be useful for token hirees to request their immediate supervisor for additional work which may, initially, appear to be an extra burden but which offers an opportunity for visibility. As soon as the task is completed, the employee should send memos to her supervisor, the supervisor's supervisor and personnel file to that effect. The strategy of assuming extra responsibility is especially useful if it will result in contact with an important decision maker who could not otherwise be accessed.

Dale suggests that concerned men should openly discuss these problems with women co-workers and actively join them in a search for solutions. Too often women find themselves in the "can't win" situation which Dale describes:

> "If they are vital and assertive, they are rejected as 'aggressive bitches out to castrate men'; if they are quiet and unassuming, they are rejected as unlikely to amount to much".

Women who do find themselves in positions of leadership should assume personal responsibility to seek out women in the organization who have executive potential and encourage them to develop it.

Nancy R. Hooyman[4] and Judith S. Kaplan (1976) stress the need for women to develop skills for working effectively together and offering mutual support. At the same time they point to the need for women to learn to work effectively with male colleagues and to allow those men to preserve their dignity as they work with women.

In the past man has not had many opportunities to work with women as equals and there may be some discomfort in their early efforts to do so. Joyce Kaser[5] (1975) suggests that less emphasis be placed upon appropriate behavior and expectations for males and for females and more upon what is simply "human". Kaser also suggest that women might give some consideration to situations where they could use the words "sweetie" "sonny" or "dear" in addressing males, or consider addressing a male speaker as a father of two and a husband! Kaser admits that it may be difficult to convince those who believe that sex roles are divinely endowed that female colleagues should not be treated any differently than male. Barbara Johnson[6] (1977) especially expresses concern that women learn to deal effectively with male bosses who may try to protect them from taking risks or the consequences of decisionmaking. Women, she emphasizes, must be allowed to be responsible for their own mistakes.

Johnson also urges any women in a responsible postion to seek a mentor. (Frequently such a woman already has one, or she might not have received the position.)

Johnson believes that it is important that women learn to work with a mentor, discussing plans for future growth, seeking advice, listening and responding to criticism with real action plans. These action plans, with specified long and short term goals should be periodically evaluated and updated. She concludes that it is important for women to learn to accurately assess their own strengths and weaknesses and to modify career goals accordingly.

Linda Phillips[7] (1977) discusses collected recommendations of several successful managers and their comments about mentors. Women who participated in the study on which she reports were asked to rank persons who most directly influenced their careers. Male bosses, husbands and both parents emerged

most influential. Others frequently cited were work associates (especially male) and teachers (especially male). Phillips found that 61% of women studied stated they had one or more career mentors during their lifetimes. According to Phillips:

> "A total of 81% said they believe that mentors are helpful to young women beginning their career in business and industry; 76% have acted as mentors to one or more proteges of their own in the past, and 75% plan to act as mentors in the future."

Phillips found that there are different reasons for choosing to become a mentor and that some mentoring experiences are more useful than others. Some mentors take great risks for their proteges and others have very businesslike arrangements. Some mentors are in it for what they get out of it; others are only on the giving end.

Some women have never considered their work of any importance, according to Alma Baron[8] (1976). Their own perspective forced them to demean their positions. Baron recommends that such women consider special workshops, training programs, and seminars designed to encourage them to value themselves as women and to value the work of women. Baron adds that women often have a great prejudice against other women, but that once they learn to overcome it, they will begin to gain strength from other women.

It must be stressed that a women who undertakes any of these actions and in so doing becomes qualified, convinced that a woman may hold a more meaningful position, is helpless if the employer disagrees. In such instances the individual action of filing a grievance with the company or a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) bears careful consideration.

In 1973, the Civil Service Commission in the State of Washington began a program to provide career counseling and remedial training programs for its employees. Janice Kay[9] (1976) in her article, describes an experimental program expected to last two years and involve about 1,000 women. One phase of it was designed to help the participant understand her progessional and private self and to learn to balance the two factors. Program designers believed the success of the program depended on the woman's ability to value her own self accurately, acknowledge her own strengths and weaknesses, and communicate with others — giving and receiving help, working as part of a team, making decisions about themselves, and evaluating the results. Evaluation of the program described by Kay was to be based on the number of women in government who were placed in managerial positions formerly considered only "male".

Sally Dias[10] (1976) presented a paper to the 1976 meeting of the American Educational Research Association in which she contended that research demonstrates that women are not as willing as men are to commit themselves to graduate work and relates that finding to the small number of women who hold administrative positions. While women must train and have the necessary experience for decision-making positions, research also demonstrates that women who so qualified are frequently passed over in favor of male applicants.

Doris Timpano[11] (1976) suggests that women seek out opportunities for internships and participate in other leadership activities designed to help prepare administrators. Such opportunities require an effort put beyond normal requirements but provide excellent opportunities to demonstrate competency. Women must look creatively and politically at each task and build competencies as they grow.

Strategies for Organizations

Now that women have infiltrated the higher echelons of management, they can begin to work together to remove those barriers which still work to slow the full participation of women in the organizations with which we are associated.

Susan Christen and Frances Syptak[12] (1976) describe a joint program sponsored by Montgomery County (Maryland) government and a college entitled "The Dynamics of Job Mobility."

At the time of the author's report 12 workshops had been held, with over 300 women participating. Participants were helped to identify available positions and required qualifications. They were taught to assess their own skills, make decisions about positions they might be qualified for and to determine what additional training might be necessary to assure success in moving up. The authors report that many of the participants did receive promotions and salary increases; the greatest payoff, however, was in the heightened sense of self-worth and self-esteem the women reported.

A similar program was developed in Montana after the governor urged his staff to develop a management program for Division Administrators and Deputy Directors in response to a recommendation from the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee for Women. The goal of the Montana effort was to place 20 to 25 qualified employees in mid-to-upper-level management positions (Grade 15 or above) by May 1, 1979. This program was not designed to exclusively serve women and was not for the purpose of filling newly created positions. In creating the program, the governor expressed the belief that both the public and the employees would benefit. In the first case, taxpayers would receive greater service from personnel trained before they were placed in a position of responsibility and in the second individuals would benefit from both the training and advancement opportunity and from increased job satisfaction and self-esteem.

In both of the programs described above the leadership came from the top. Eklund[13] (1976) contends that the first requirement for a successful improvement of the numbers of opportunities available for women is a strong commitment from top leadership, accompanied by an effort to inspire others to fulfill the corporate intent. One firm coupled its affirmative action goals with criteria for salary increases to the management level staff.

The fact that women are seriously committed to the work force suggests that women will seriously prepare for all those positions that are in the work force and will, therefore, continue to increase their participation within the walls of the universities. That fact, in turn, creates a demand that discrimination against women in admission to colleges and universities, unequal access to financial aid and to internships must be tackled. In many educational institutions women graduate students are still being deprived of assistanceships, research opportunities and collegial relationships with mentors and contacts. This need not remain the case; these policies and practices can be changed at will by institutional decision-makers. These same administrators have it within their power to change the rulings against part-time study which operate against many women seeking to resume their educations. Prejudice against part-time students has caused many women extreme difficulty in juggling study and family responsibilities, frequently making it necessary for them to postpone their continued study. Significant improvements in all these areas are necessary if women are to be assisted in their attempts to assume full responsibilities for leadership positions by furthering their educations.

Kanter[14] (1976) describes the objectives of the project.

Roseabeth Moss Kanter and Margaret J. Wheatley, reporting on a project which explored career development of women in academic administration, found the role and value of the training varied with the needs of the target group. For example, they found that while senior women benefited from sharing training programs in which prestigious top officials participated, entering women seemed to benefit more from internships which provided invaluable opportunities to gain job experience.

Kanter and Wheatley concluded that women must have a combination of formal and informal supports in order to succeed. They need jobs which provide chances to develop new skills, reach toward new challenges and take advantage of a variety of opportunities for growth. According to the authors,

> "They develop best, as men do, when their positions are empowering, giving them the chance to create or innovate, to become visible and recognized, and to demonstrate their capacity to solve problems critical to the institution. Informal relationships are also important: personal support systems close to home (as opposed to distant networks), more senior people willing to sponsor or endorse them, colleague acceptance, connections that give them access to information or the chance to trade favors." p.4.

Kanter and Wheatley found that training programs are not the total answer, each person must take the job and make it work for them in their own style. The authors recommend focusing upon single elements that people found valuable, building a training unit around them, rather than combining several elements into a single training program. They concluded that programs are less elaborate, less costly, and can often be more closely linked with institutional issues on local and decentralized bases.

Kanter and Wheatley also suggest a strategy to affect power and opportunity for women inside the institution. Goals are the creation of opportunities to demonstrate new skills, acquire credibility, increase visibility, contribute to the solving of institutional problems and development talent. Project teams should have a balance of upper and lower status and should offer women and men specific training for all team members (technical, financial, organizational, etc.). Topics for the project ought to be based on the current and future needs of the institution.

Released time should be provided for junior staff members if long-range training is undertaken. This approach overcomes the need to change existing hierarchy and allows for change.

The most comprehensive strategy for correcting all the factors related to the underrepresentation of women in educational administration is the implementation of Executive Order 11246 which requires affirmative action plans. The fact that, although this legislation was to have been implemented in 1970, no significant change in the placing of competent women in leadership roles has occurred suggests the depth of the problem. The mechanics for correcting the dilemma are included in the guidelines, but some universities have yet to fully implement them. In STRATEGIES FOR ADVANCING WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION by Garry D. Hays (reprinted in PROJECT ON THE STATUS AND EDUCATION OF WOMEN) the author says,

> "In addition to statements of policy and intent, institutions need to establish, by department and by operating unit within the administration goals - by occupational level - for affirmative hiring ... Current staffing patterns are then viewed in comparison

> to the number of vacancies and/or additions — known or anticipated — for the coming year and in relation to the market availability in each category. Each president then submits to my office affirmative employment goals for each unit and for each category." p.2

The advantages of this approach, according to the author, are that it 1) emphasizes the need to add women in all departments; 2) focuses attention on affirmative action; 3) includes market availability data which leads to more realistic goal setting. Hays continues;

> "To create a better and more specific procedure for identifying goals will not produce any better results than the general statements of affirmative action unless they are taken seriously. Thus, consideration of the quality of the effort in achieving those goals should be a part of the performancy evaluation of supervisors and ultimately of the chief executive officers of universities and systems."

Hays believes that by linking responsibility to performance evaluation, those who are responsible have a stake in the implementation of the policy and can no longer get away with a simple "we are an affirmative action employer!" on each of the positions posted.

Search committees are critical; they make recommendations for interviewing and/or hiring. It is not sufficient to simply read curriculum vitae. As long as the traditional approach to search committees continues, women will not be invited for interviews. Hays said,

> "In one case, the campus search committee did not even recommend that the woman candidate be interviewed. She was interviewed only after my office insisted that she must be. After the interview, she was the top choice not only of the president but of all the groups participating in the process." p.2

Hays insists that without deviation from the usual search procedure, another male would have been hired. He suggests that the president use the committee in an advisory role and make it very clear that the final decision is his/hers. Hays believes that committees should make recommendations and provide individual evaluations of specific competencies. If more women are to be placed, Hays feels that search committees must describe positions more in terms of required competencies and less in terms of traditional educational experience and training. Hays uses as an example a vice-presidency position which opened. In the past dean-level experience was required. Hays says this requirement severely restricts the number of women who can apply and may not be related to specific functions of the vice presidency they were seeking to fill. Hays states,

> "Of three recent appointments in the Minnesota State University System — one president and two academic vice presidents — the "highest" position previously held was associate dean; yet all three had the ability and competence to compete successfully for the positions."

Hays recommends that the vitas of women applicants be held and used at appropriate times when qualified applicants are sought for other positions. The search committee might visit with these women after the appointment is made and add new information to the files for future searches, since personal

interviews permit a more accurate assessment of competencies. A re-evaluation of the need for masters and Ph.D.'s is in order since often women in the past have been excluded from these programs. He continues,

> "In our office, we have three women in middle management positions who started off as secretaries; three others have moved into middle level management from entry level staff positions." p.2

Even though the budgets are being cut, their institution is making an even greater amount of money available for training and professional development of their women employees. Lack of certain kinds of experience can be compensated for by on-the-job training in specific areas. Hays also recommends providing ad hoc administrative responsibilities for women in order to permit them to test their interests and broaden their understanding of university administration as well as provide them with additional experience. Hays stresses the need for provision of support systems for women administrators. These systems should include opportunities for the discussion of educational issues as well as provide mutual support for the participants.

In A PROGRAM TO OVERCOME SEX BIAS BARRIERS IN WOMEN'S QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION POSTS by Margery A. Nealy and Alfred E. Wilson[15] (1978), described procedures to assist women aspiring to vocational education administration who are not properly certified. This project surveyed attitudes, barriers, and employment opportunities in Kansas and determined the effectiveness of a portfolio guide describing administrative competencies acquired through unpaid experiences. Questionnaires were sent to a random sample of vocational personnel. The results were used to design a personal growth workshop to reduce stereotypes and to design the experimental portfolio Guide. Women vocational education teachers volunteered to develop portfolios of their administrative skills. These were then analyzed and rated for competency by vocational education administrators. Six of the portfolio authors attended an assessment session and completed criterion measures for a study of the validity of the portfolio. Reliability was calculated on ratings and criterion. The portfolios were useful for convincing those responsible for hiring and placement decisions that there are different methods for acquiring competencies. Portfolios were an inspiration to those women who prepared them as they began to see that, indeed, they were more competent that even they had assumed. One participant wrote,

> "I'm sure we all came away with a positive feeling about ourselves and with new knowledge or former knowledge reinforced about what we are very capable of doing and what may need improvment." p. 167

Another writes,

> "Just signed a contract this morning as Vocational Coordinator and Administrative Assistant! I think I told you that my boss was resigning — that job has been combined with what will be an assistant principalship when I get the necessary administrative hours to legally handle the suspension, etc. Yes, it's exciting — and surprising — to be in administration so soon, but I haven't gotten used to thinking of me without "my" students." p. 168

The sex equity workshops were planned to explore dynamics concerning self-concepts, assertiveness training, administrative issues and values clarification. It was hoped that some women would aspire to administration as the result of these workshops. Participants explored useful approaches for educators working toward increased sex fairness in vocational education. Both of these strategies could be duplicated by other states who are seriously committed to increasing the number of women in education administration.

The authors found that in Kansas there were a number of women who spend more that 50% of their time in administrative tasks but were still classified as teachers. With title changes, these women could be considered among the administrative ranks and paid accordingly. This practice is frequently identified as a factor related to the underrepresentation of women in administration. It is included here so decision-makers responsible for placement may be encouraged to seriously examine those women already on their staff for women who are functioning as administrators but are not receiving the title, pay or visibility they deserve. An adjustment in this practice would establish immediate role models as well as demonstrate a commitment to the removal of those factors which in the past caused women to be underrepresented in education administration.

G. G. Alpander and J. E. Guttman[16] (1976), maintain that management is really no different for women than for men. They feel that women come from different fields of experience and some are not as well prepared for certain management functions as some men. Once a woman understands herself as a person and relates this to her responsibilities as manager, they feel there will no longer be a need for programs designed especially for the woman manager. Until that goal is reached, however, there is a need. The authors recommend that management training programs be geared to the natural "caring instincts and family orientation" for which women have been conditioned. Too often the training programs are designed to appeal to the male point of view. The functions of organizing, planning, coordinating, controlling, supervising, motivating, and training are the same skills required by all managers but should be approached differently according to Alexander and Guttman.

Affirmative action requirements have generated the more positive and successful programs in existence today. The identification of leaders is one of the more crucial responsibilities assigned to personnel. During the seventies, a number of women and minorities were hired in order to meet the goals of affirmative action plans. At this time, growth in business had somewhat stabilized and it fell to the personnel department to identify potential leaders from this pool of ambitious young workers. D. M. Reid[17] (1972) describes a plan which includes developmental or promotional moves listed by job titles. Monthly records are kept. The system gives the motivated employee a significant role in developing his or her own career. The worker understands job opportunities and requests certain experiences in order to make a choice, for example, between a commitment to a permanent career in sales or marketing management. It provides the company the opportunity to prepare two or three qualified people for top leadership positions that will be opening up in the next two or three years. Reid adds,

> "Perhaps the most conclusive proof of the system's effectiveness is the fact that practically every senior vacancy in the information system's group during the past five years has been filled from within our own ranks; that is, our ultimate testimonial to the value of human resources planning." p. 25

The most effective method for changing employment patterns is through the affirmative action plan, according to Gretchen Niedermeyer and Vicki Kramer[18] (1974). In a paper entitled "Women in Administrative Positions in Public Education: A Position Paper", they suggest equal employment

opportunity must be preceded by affirmative action. They request an examination of qualifications since often they are not predictors of competancy. The required advanced degrees and required years of experience are often not job related but may effectively exclude women. Many women have been unable to gain one or the other because of absences from the paid labor force.

Neidermeyer and Kramer are also concerned about the lack of support provided to the women who are finally selected for positions and suggest that if the support isn't there, the affirmative action plan should be suspect. The authors said,

> "Procedures without specific efforts to make them work are meaningless, and effort undirected by specific and meaningful procedures is inadequate."

According to Neidermeyer and Kramer, recruitment of one sex is not a new idea. Years ago an effort was made to "defeminize the schools" by attracting men into secondary education and more recently into elementary education; nobody seemed overly concerned. Affirmative action does not suggest lowering standards, rather, the action will establish and support competent individuals. In elementary education, unqualified men were not hired but there was a specific effort to identify men and some criteria may have been adjusted in order to get men into elementary education. That is just what affirmative action is to do.

Businesses have recently turned to assessment centers for further assistance with the selection of persons they have identified for management training programs. James R. Huck and Douglas W. Bray[19] (1976), describe the usefulness of such a center. The article stresses that at one center white and black women were tested separately without statistically significant differences being demonstrated. The affirmative action offices used The Center because their predictions were accurate, increasing their confidence in recommending candidates for promotion. Huck and Bray believe one of the reasons for their high degree of accuracy is the results of their use of simulated work experiences in addition to a simple paper and pencil test. The Assessment Center activities are judgments about the candidates by real managers who observe potential administrators while they are working. The evaluators watch for energy level, resistance to stress, inner work standards, self objectivity, managerial identification, forcefulness, likability, range of interests, scholastic aptitudes, awareness of social environment, behavior flexibility, leadership, need for superior approval, need for peer approval, organizing and planning, decision-making, oral communication skill and written communication skill. Candidates are ranked by the evaluators. Discussion with the candidates follows and reports are forwarded to the institution responsible for sending the participants.

Hooyman and Kaplan, cited earlier, consider the adjustment to full-time work a major barrier for women and recommend adaptations. Maternity and paternity leaves will make a woman's role easier to maintain, according to the authors. Child care facilities must be established at the universities and/or places of business if these employers are serious in their commitment to hire and retain qualified women in their paid work force. In addition to the above strategies, Hooyman and Kaplan have developed a training model which they describe briefly in their article. They say,

> "The model focuses upon training women for upper-level positions in planning, administration/management, and policy formation. These positions require the abilities to set long-range goals

and develop the plans to attain them, to make and implement significant decisions that affect others, to negotiate and resolve conflict, to develop proposals and grants, to influence and mobilize others, to form coalitions, and to run meetings efficiently. The authors have identified internal, interpersonal and structural barriers to women acquiring these skills." p. 376

Both industry and education must begin actively recruiting women candidates for administrative positions. Women must be recruited for school board positions as well. Professional organizations must take on the responsibility for working with the problems of sex discrimination according to Neidermeyer and Kramer. These organizations must not only open their membership to women but also set aside time in their professional conferences for the discussion of these concerns by national experts. Each of us must be informed of the terrible loss to all which results when half our educational professionals are deprived of full partnership in institutional growth.

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